Catalogue no. 89-656-X2016004
ISBN 978-0-660-02916-0

Aboriginal Peoples: Fact Sheets

Aboriginal peoples: Fact sheet for Nova Scotia

by Shirley Li
Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division

Release date: March 14, 2016

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website, www.statcan.gc.ca.

You can also contact us by

email at STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca

telephone, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the following toll-free numbers:

- Statistical Information Service 1-800-263-1136
- National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired 1-800-363-7629
- Fax line 1-877-287-4369

Depository Services Program

- Inquiries line 1-800-635-7943
- Fax line 1-800-565-7757

Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, Statistics Canada has developed standards of service that its employees observe. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll-free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on www.statcan.gc.ca under "Contact us" > "Standards of service to the public."

Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

Standard table symbols

The following symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

. not available for any reference period
.. not available for a specific reference period
... not applicable
0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p} preliminary
^{r} revised
x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E} use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2016

All rights reserved. Use of this publication is governed by the Statistics Canada Open Licence Agreement.

An HTML version **is also available.**

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

Aboriginal Peoples: Fact Sheet for Nova Scotia

About 2% of Aboriginal people in Canada live in Nova Scotia

- Numbering 33,845, about 2% of the Aboriginal identity population in Canada lived in Nova Scotia in 2011. They made up 4% of the province's total population.

- Three in ten (29%) Aboriginal people in Nova Scotia resided in Halifax, representing 3% of the total population living there. Cape Breton had the province's highest proportion of Aboriginal people: 6%.

- Nova Scotia was home to 21,895 First Nations people, 10,050 Métis, and 695 Inuit, with the rest reporting other[1] Aboriginal identities (980) or more than one Aboriginal identity (225). From 2006 to 2011, the First Nations population in Nova Scotia increased by 44%, while the Métis population rose by 31%, and the Inuit population more than doubled.[2]

- Of those who identified as First Nations people in 2011, 59% or 12,910 reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada. Four in ten (41% or 8,875) First Nations people (68% of First Nations people who were Treaty or Registered Indians, or 8,775 individuals) lived on a reserve.

Aboriginal population younger than non-Aboriginal

- About four in ten (43%) Aboriginal people were under the age of 25, compared with 28% of the non-Aboriginal population. Almost half (46%) of First Nations people were in this age group (53% of those living on a reserve and 42% of the off-reserve population), as were 35% of Métis and 42% of Inuit.

- In 2011, the median age of First Nations people was 27.5; the on-reserve population was younger (22.9) than those living off reserve (31.1). Métis had a median age of 36.6; that of Inuit was 31.4. All three groups were younger than the non-Aboriginal population, whose median age was 43.9.

About the data sources

The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) are the main data sources for this fact sheet. The 2011 NHS collected social and economic data about the Canadian population. The 2012 APS was a national survey of First Nations people **living off reserve**, Métis, and Inuit aged 6 and older. The data are for the **Aboriginal identity population**, which refers to people who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, First Nations, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation. It was possible to report both single and multiple responses to the Aboriginal identity questions on the NHS and the APS. The NHS data in this fact sheet are based on single responses only. The APS data represent a combination of the single and multiple Aboriginal identity populations. Nearly all off-reserve First Nations, Métis, and Inuit respondents reported a single identity.

1. This includes people who reported having Registered Indian status and/or being members of an Indian band or First Nation without reporting an Aboriginal identity.
2. A number of factors should be taken into account when comparing data on Aboriginal people over time. Please refer to the *Aboriginal Peoples Reference Guide, National Household Survey, 2011*, Catalogue no. 99-011-X2011006 and the *Aboriginal Peoples Technical Report*, Catalogue no. 99-011-X.

Almost half of Aboriginal children live with both parents

- In Nova Scotia, 41% of First Nations children aged 14 and younger lived in a family with both their parents in 2011, as did 61% of Métis children and 32% of Inuit children. The corresponding percentage for non-Aboriginal children was 69%. About 44% of First Nations, 31% of Métis and 61% of Inuit children lived in a lone-parent family, higher rates than for their non-Aboriginal peers (23%).

- In 2011, 2% of Aboriginal children aged 14 and younger were in foster care; at 3%, the percentage was highest for First Nations children living on reserve. Moreover, of all Nova Scotia children in foster care in 2011, 23% were Aboriginal children, the majority of whom were First Nations children.

Table 1
Percentage distribution of children aged 14 and under by living arrangement, by selected Aboriginal identity group and area of residence, Nova Scotia, 2011

	Total Aboriginal identity population	First Nations single identity			Métis single identity	Inuit single identity	Non-Aboriginal identity population
		Total	On reserve	Off reserve			
	percent						
Children of both parents[1]	45.6	40.8	36.8	44.8	61.4	31.6	68.6
Stepchildren	9.4	10.3	8.8	11.9	7.4	0.0	6.6
Children of lone parent	41.2	43.9	48.3	39.6	31.3	60.5	23.2
Grandchildren in skip-generation family	1.3	1.7	2.4	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
Foster children	2.0	2.7	2.7	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.4
Children living with other relatives[2]	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2

1. Includes children in a two-parent family where there may also be stepsiblings or half-siblings present. Also includes children in a two-parent family for whom it cannot be determined if they are stepchildren.
2. Non-relatives may be present. Excludes foster children.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

On-reserve First Nations people most likely to live in crowded homes and homes requiring major repairs

- In 2011, 10% of on-reserve and 2% of off-reserve First Nations people in Nova Scotia lived in crowded homes, that is, with more than one person per room. Among Métis, the percentage was 1%, and among Inuit, 3%. The comparable figure for the non-Aboriginal population was 1%.

- Almost one in four (23%) First Nations people, 15% of Métis and 18% of Inuit lived in homes in need of major repairs; the rate was highest for First Nations people living on a reserve (34%).

Table 2
Percentages living in crowded homes and homes in need of major repairs, by selected Aboriginal identity group and area of residence, Nova Scotia, 2011

	Total Aboriginal identity population	First Nations single identity			Métis single identity	Inuit single identity	Non-Aboriginal identity population
		Total	On reserve	Off reserve			
	percent						
Crowding[1]	4.0	5.6	10.1	2.5	0.8	2.9	1.2
Home in need of major[2] repairs	20.4	23.4	34.1	16.1	14.9	18.0	9.5

1. More than one person per room.
2. For example, dwellings with defective plumbing or electrical wiring and dwellings needing structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

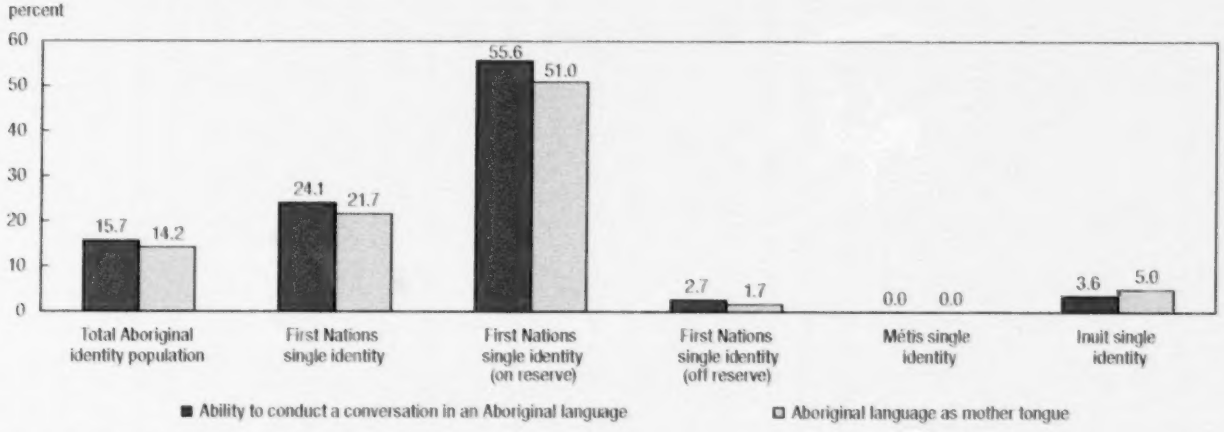
Over half of on-reserve First Nations people speak an Aboriginal language

- In Nova Scotia, 56% of First Nations people living on a reserve reported the ability to conduct a conversation in an Aboriginal language, a much higher rate than that among off-reserve First Nations people (3%). The Aboriginal language most commonly spoken by First Nations people was Mi'kmaq.

- The number of First Nations people who reported being able to converse in an Aboriginal language exceeded the number who reported an Aboriginal mother tongue, which suggests acquisition of an Aboriginal language as a second language.

- Based on results of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey,[3] 61% of off-reserve First Nations people and 30% of Métis[4] aged 6 and older reported that speaking and understanding an Aboriginal language was important to them.

Chart 1
Ability to converse in an Aboriginal language and Aboriginal language as mother tongue, by selected Aboriginal identity group and area of residence, Nova Scotia, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

More than half have postsecondary qualifications

- In 2011, 59% of Aboriginal people aged 25 to 64 in Nova Scotia had a certificate, diploma or degree from a trade school, college or university: 56% of First Nations people, 66% of Métis and 68% of Inuit. The comparable percentage for their non-Aboriginal counterparts was 64%.

- Among those with postsecondary credentials, First Nations people, Métis and Inuit were more likely than non-Aboriginal graduates to have completed programs below the bachelor's level (trades or college programs).

- In 2011, 21% of First Nations people aged 25 to 64, 16% of Métis and 17% of Inuit did not have a certificate, diploma or degree. The corresponding percentage for the non-Aboriginal population was 14%.

3. The target population of the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) excluded people living on Indian reserves and in Indian settlements in the provinces and in selected First Nations communities in the territories.
4. Some characteristics for Inuit are not included because of the small number of Inuit living in the province.

Table 3
Highest level of educational attainment of population aged 25 to 64, by selected Aboriginal identity group and area of residence, Nova Scotia, 2011

	Total Aboriginal identity population	First Nations single identity			Métis single identity	Inuit single identity	Non-Aboriginal identity population
		Total	On reserve	Off reserve			
	percent						
No certificate, diploma or degree	19.5	20.5	26.1	17.3	16.2	16.7	14.4
High school diploma or equivalent	21.5	23.9	20.6	25.8	17.5	13.3	21.7
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	59.0	55.6	53.3	56.8	66.3	68.3	63.8
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	15.5	16.7	19.3	15.1	14.5	11.7	13.0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	23.6	20.6	16.1	23.2	28.9	33.3	23.0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level[1]	4.6	4.7	5.2	4.5	4.8	0.0	4.1
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	15.4	13.6	12.6	14.1	18.1	21.7	23.7

1. Comparisons with other data sources suggest that the category "University certificate or diploma below bachelor level" was overreported in the National Household Survey (NHS). The results for this category should be interpreted with caution. For more information on concepts and data quality, refer to the NHS reference guides and *Education Reference Guide* on the Statistics Canada website.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Employment rates and median total income increase with education

- In 2011, the employment rates of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit aged 25 to 64 in Nova Scotia who did not have a certificate, diploma or degree were 37.7%, 45.7% and 30.0% respectively. Employment rates were higher for those with further education. For example, among those with postsecondary credentials, the employment rate of First Nations people was 72.3%, while that of Métis was 78.3% and that of Inuit, 92.5%.

Table 4
Employment rate of population aged 25 to 64, by highest level of educational attainment, selected Aboriginal identity group and area of residence, Nova Scotia, 2011

	Total Aboriginal identity population	First Nations single identity			Métis single identity	Inuit single identity	Non-Aboriginal identity population
		Total	On reserve	Off reserve			
	employment rate (percent)						
Total	**64.7**	**61.5**	**48.9**	**68.8**	**70.7**	**75.0**	**72.0**
No certificate, diploma or degree	39.4	37.7	29.1	45.1	45.7	30.0	51.2
High school diploma or equivalent	59.3	57.2	43.5	63.7	64.3	87.5	68.4
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	75.0	72.3	61.0	78.3	78.3	92.5	77.9

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

- Median total income[5] was also higher for those with higher education levels. Among First Nations people aged 25 to 64, median total income (rounded to the nearest $1,000) ranged from $12,000 for those with no certificate, diploma or degree to $29,000 for those with postsecondary credentials. The range for Métis was from $18,000 to $37,000 and for Inuit from $11,000 to $46,000.

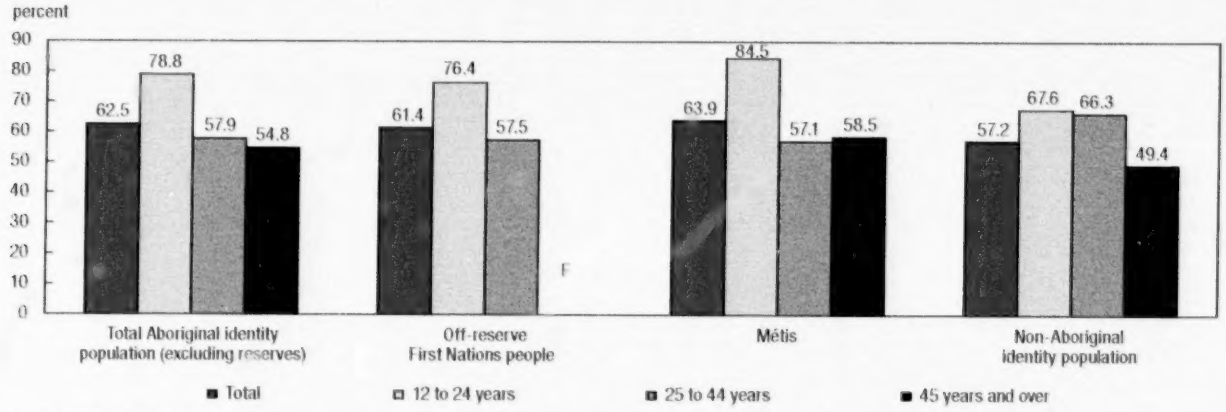
More than half rated their health as excellent or very good

- Based on results of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, more than half (63%) the Aboriginal population aged 12 and older in Nova Scotia rated their health as excellent or very good in 2012 (61% of First Nations people living off reserve and 64% of Métis).

- First Nations people living off reserve and Métis aged 12 to 24 had overall health ratings higher than their non-Aboriginal peers.[6] Among those aged 25 to 44, the reverse was true.

5. Total income includes income from all sources, including employment income, income from government programs, pension income, investment income and any other money income. The calculation includes population with income and without income (with an income of zero).
6. Health data for the non-Aboriginal population were drawn from the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey.

Chart 2
Excellent or very good self-rated overall health of population aged 12 and over, by selected Aboriginal identity group[1] and age group, Nova Scotia, 2012



F too unreliable to be published
1. Data for Inuit are included in the total Aboriginal identity population but are not shown separately because of the small number of Inuit living in the province.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012, and Canadian Community Health Survey, 2012.

- The majority (64%) of the Aboriginal identity population (61% of off-reserve First Nations people and 66% of Métis) aged 18 and older reported excellent or very good mental health.[7] The comparable percentage for the non-Aboriginal population was 72%.

- Three-quarters (75%) of off-reserve First Nations people and 73% of Métis aged 12 and older reported that they had been diagnosed with at least one chronic condition. The corresponding percentage for the non-Aboriginal population was 62%.

- Among Aboriginal people, commonly reported conditions included arthritis excluding fibromyalgia (28%), high blood pressure (25%), bowel disorders (15%[E]) and asthma (12%). In addition, 17% reported an anxiety disorder and 13%[E] reported a mood disorder.

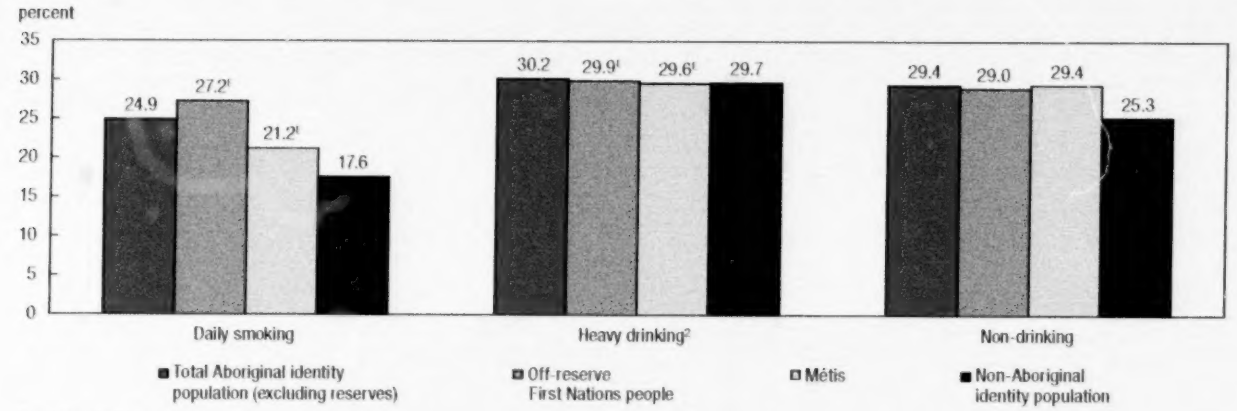
One-quarter of off-reserve First Nations people smoked daily

- In 2012, 27%[E] of off-reserve First Nations people aged 12 and older in Nova Scotia reported that they smoked daily, as did 21%[E] of Métis. The comparable percentage for the non-Aboriginal population was 18%.

- For those 12 and older, the rate of heavy drinking (five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month in the 12 months preceding the survey) was 30% for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. At the same time, 29% of off-reserve First Nations people and Métis were non-drinkers (consumed no alcohol in the 12 months preceding the survey), compared with 25% of the non-Aboriginal population.

7. Questions on self-rated mental health were only asked of respondents who were providing answers to the survey directly, on their own behalf (i.e., data are not available when questionnaires were completed by proxy interview).

Chart 3
Selected health behaviours of population aged 12 and over, by selected Aboriginal identity group,[1] Nova Scotia, 2012



E use with caution

1. Data for Inuit are included in the total Aboriginal identity population but are not shown separately because of the small number of Inuit living in the province.
2. Heavy drinking refers to the consumption of five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012; and Canadian Community Health Survey, 2012.